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DEMANDS STRICTER WORK DISCIPLINE

Hungarian work discipline came under attack again as the major issue at the 29 March 1952 Budapest conference of the party's central leadership.

Zoltan Vas, president of the National Planning Office, told the assembled economists and representatives of industry, trade unions, and the medical profession that stricter work discipline during 1952 could mean 2 billion forints in terms of increased production.

Citing figures compiled by the Central Statistical Office, he called attention to the fact that 28 work days per laborer, 9 percent of the working time, were lost in 1951. Investigation proved that at least half that time was consumed by unwarranted absences in the guise of sick leave.

Statistics showing a decline in absenteeism cannot be taken at face value, said Vas, because excused absences increased in direct proportion to the decrease in absenteeism. A recent spot check conducted by the Ministry of Public Health revealed that 21 percent of those on sick leave were actually malingering, while the term "bedridden" was found to be applicable to only 20-30 percent of recorded cases. Vas placed the blame on managers, supervisors, and foremen who condoned tardiness, loafing, etc.

Supervisory cadres were reprimanded on two more counts: first, for losing considerable manpower through accidents due to failure to provide safety equipment and enforce safety regulations; secondly, for making no effort to curtail the wast labor migrations. Vas claimed that 62,500 workers changed jobs without permission last year and many more left their jobs in mines, foundries, and machine factories with the manager's approval. Nothing was done to induce these men to stay, because managers and foremen continued to disregard the value of

Due partly to the instability of manpower, machine stoppages increased 14 percent in the metallurgical and 70 percent in the machine industry during 1951 and cost light industry 30 hours' overtime for each 100 hours' stoppage.

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In conclusion, Was called upon trade unions, party members, and working youths' associations to intensify their labor-educating campaign. He asked them to stress labor's responsibility to the state and teach the working masses to take an aggressive stand against loafers, absentees, etc., by reporting all work-discipline violations to their superiors, challenging lemient attitudes on the part of the supervisors, and following up matters until corrective action is taken against the offenders.

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